

# THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

BY S. TEN EYCK BOURKE AND CHARLES FRANCIS BOURKE



**A**NOTHER investigation! Little Welsh, line gunner, "sky skipper," and smallest man of Ships Bottom Life Saving Station on Barnegat Beach, No. 3 on the roster of the crew, and second in account only after Captain Tom Casco and Long Johnson, Surfman No. 1, slammed into thursessroom, slammed his fancy braided service cap on the table, and slammed himself into a chair beside the last named life guards, both of whom were smoking unit pipes in perfect peace and quietude and gloom, and all three with their hands thrust deep down into breeches pockets, as if they suspected the vessel at large of designs on their brawny persons or their personal possessions.

The impression was helped along by a general atmosphere of despondency which pervaded the place and all the other officers, who, seeing and hearing Welsh, forthrightly, the open doors and windows from the beach and a strong breeze from this melancholy, storm-battered, storm-battered, downcast familiars of the three inside, in the jackets and belted sea-boots, also smoking unit pipes.

For the crew of Ships Bottom was afraid! Captain Casco nodded without looking up. "I expect it's news of that crazy Carmichael boat—course, I was looking for it."

"You ain't looking for this whack," the little gunner burst out with the desperation of one who had worse behind him. "Super 'imself's coming down—I heard it over the village. These here recent acts of Providence on the Gridiron Reef has give us the worst name of the service, both ships and jills, up Ships Bottom, 'savin' average till—till the Government's going to look as if we can't make good. That's what! Welsh can't look out of breath, temper, and indignation."

The news went silent save for the hoarse breathings of the news. "Break Ships Bottom?" The Government was going to break—Why, Ships Bottom was the crack crew of the Barnegat wrecking beach—of the whole Atlantic seaboard! The per cent, records showed it—up to the beginning of that season!

It is the sworn duty to prevent shipwreck, to save men and ships before as well as after disaster, whenever humanly possible; now, for the last two or three months, wreck after wreck had piled up on Ships Bottom station in a run of hard luck unparalleled in the history of the coast.

"Hit us when we wasn't looking, them bookers did," as Little Welsh complained. "Come in a'most like the old Grid rock toiled 'em in a purpose!"

The big pre freighter Copper King began it, disabled and sunk earlier in the wrecking season, two miles off shore, on the farthest-flung finger of Gridiron Reef, that murderous Barnegat trap for ships that mariners dreaded, and hydrographers marked with a red circle on the chart. The twenty-thousand-tonner, an iron coffin crammed with copper ore, a ship-sinking cargo, and equipped, like all her sister vessels of the King line, with fuel-saving electric motors, for some unexplained reason running without lights, went down at night in a wailing sea-east howler, when the heavens turned to cataracts and the sea became a cinder—and she banged the reef like a battleship.

For her, Ships Bottom was not responsible: that was plain shipwreck; at least, they reached her in time to save her people. With the wrecks that followed, always on that same bluestone reef, a ledge of hard rock too far out to use the beaches busy, where the Copper King went down, they did not always have such good luck.

"Epidemic of ship suicide," Casco called it, and the inspectors agreed—at first. But when fourteen craft of varying tonnage, all iron-hulled "sinkers" (except an ancient three-masted that literally fell to pieces of old age on the beach), had come rushing in to destruction, as if told on by some unseen, resistless force from that hidden clutch of the Gridiron's giant hand, a secret horror put fear into the hearts of Ships Bottom. The thing wasn't human!

Coincidentally, to add to Ships Bottom's troubles, as if under that same traitorous thrall, the Government wireless—installed primarily to assist the life station in warning extensive craft off the dangerous shore reefs—had gone on strike along that ten-mile stretch of the Barnegat coast.

But the change had come a few days before, when the Carmichael, an electrically propelled timber, passing in ballast, had deliberately topped a breaker and swerved from her course without a wheel turning, to wash in and commit suicide, in broad daylight and a moderate gale blowing, before the life savers could recover their senses and jump the boat to make out to her. "Engine trouble," the Carmichael's skipper called it; but the case had gone to the barnyard courts, and for the first time Ships Bottom suffered the unutterable shame of seeing a revenue cutter beat 'em to it—"Wipe their eye!"

"How we goin' to head 'em off—los'n we take up station two mile out on that bluestone reef?" Captain Casco demanded, black shame gnawing at his soul.

"Them coast craft is all gone plumb lunny; don't mind the wireless no more'n a love tap! An' when they come in range of flare or flag, they're gone!"

Even the inspectors and the Washington authorities acknowledged that handicap,—the former with lurid language; the latter with experts and the installation of a hydroaëroplane at Ships Bottom, to investigate the air currents and mysterious atmospheric conditions that affected the sick Government wireless, including the flag signals and the lights.

The engineers were still up in the air, and Lloyd's and the Maritime Exchange were facing unprecedented losses. Only the Bright Wrecking & Salvage Company (old Sam Bright, the Barnegat magnate, owner) had fattened on the toll of disaster. Bright seemed to smell out imminent conditions: he had bid in everyone of the lost ships—"a'most 'fore they're wrecked," as Welsh put it—from the Copper King down; and his subsequent salvaging operations were hedged about with a shotgun secrecy that added greatly to the disfavor in which the Barnegat beachmen held him.

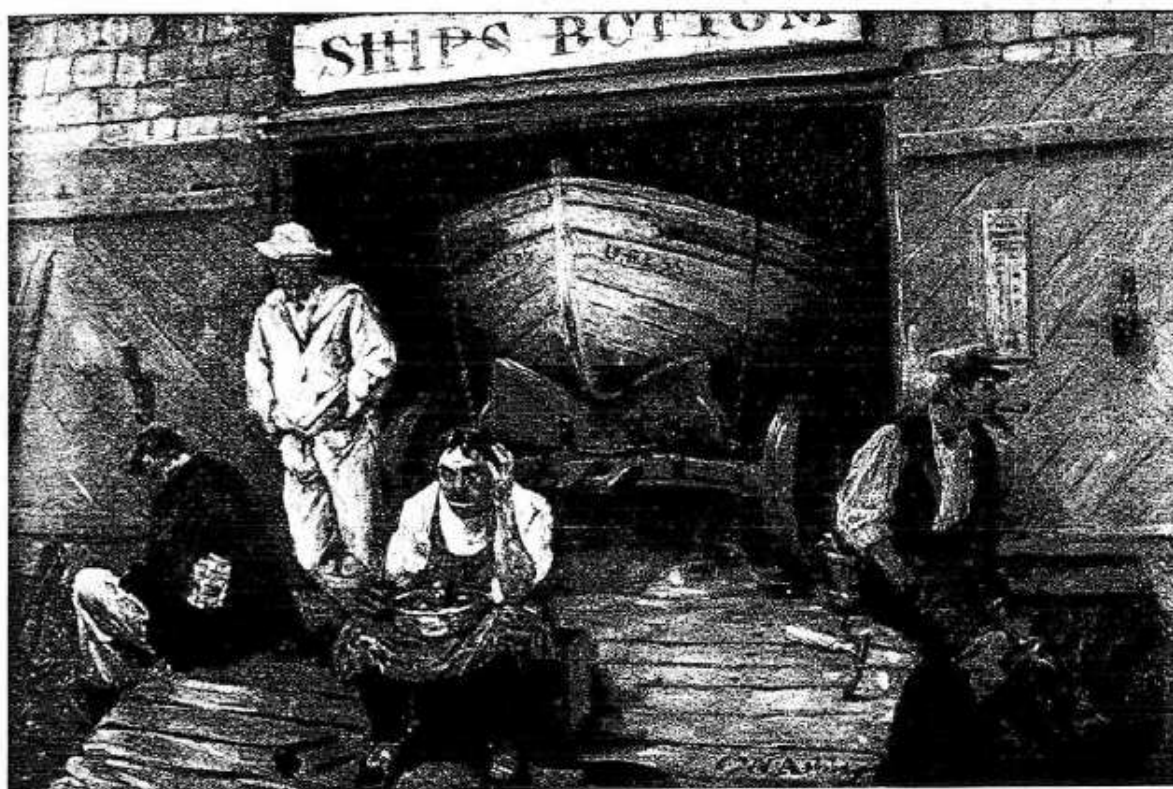
These were the mysterious "acts of Providence," culminating in the loss of the Carmichael, which had brought the revenue superintendent down on Ships Bottom, and Little Welsh as advance guard with the news of threatened disruption to the crack crew.

"Think we gone stale?" Welsh said. The faces that glared at him were not pleasant; though their anger was not directed at him. That was the trouble. At whom, then? Not at the Government, nor the superintendent, nor the inspectors; not even themselves—or the reef they guarded.

**W**ELSH, of all the Ships Bottom men, felt the situation most keenly; for his job was comparatively safe. As mechanic of the station, with experience in a previous Government aëroplane experiment, he was skipper of the hydroaëroplane, "Welsh's windjammer," the air and water craft propelled by electric storage batteries that were charged, when needful, by the Barnegat wireless.

A great change had come over Little Tom Welsh since he took up his new employment: he was no longer the iron-clad little freeboater who faced death with a grin and jeered at the grim joking of the Gridiron Reef. Maybe it was the day—"weeepy," thick with a breathless air, as of a world choking, with glazed eyes,—a menacing day; maybe the mysterious workings of the elements he had so recently mastered; at any rate, on his sober, sunburnt face was a look that even his companions in misery could not fathom.

He stamped out of the station, crossing the sands to



A General Air of Despondency Pervaded the Place.

the inlet and the bay beyond, and stopped at the lifeboat landing where the Government hydroplane lay moored, to scowl and have it out with his thoughts. Out on the Gridiron gray gulls squatted with lifeless pinions; Lighthouse Jack, the station's feathered familiar, alone circled slowly like a toy kite over the strange, flat-winged bird-ship that lay below with its long aluminum pontoons glistening in the sun's refractions. Ships Bottom was hidden in the hollow, Barnegat, over the empty bay, was like a deserted village, and the loneliness struck in like a fist.

"Somebody's going to happen right now!" Welsh growled. "You'd think that concerned that 'ud behave!" he said, venting his spleen on the slumbering hydroplane. "What for did she lay down on me out on the Grid?" An' then start running soon's the boat hauled me in, smooth as grease! Now the inspector won't let me work her, less'n it's ship alarm. I got a notion to go fine that dead ship digging company of Sam Bright's."

**GLAD** to have ye, Welshy! Good wangs an' long hours, seven days off in summer. I heered you Bottom'll all be off right quick—for kind o' foodin' things."

Welsh turned slowly, his mouth hard set, his eyes screwed up to pin points. A bulky, yellow-faced man in son wester and son boots grinned back at him from the slope of the sand dune. Big Sam Bright himself, case hardened, brain and body, by picking apart the bones of dead ships. There was no love lost between Ships Bottom and Sam Bright and his salvage company, organized for the express purpose, it seemed just then, to profit by the miseries of Welsh and his comrades.

The little seafarer was like bottled up dynamite. He moved up closer, every steel muscle in his body crawling; but he spoke softly. "Ye think we're going to get it, do ye?" An' you're a kind an' condempnin' as to offer me a job—you ghoul!"

Fighting, merely as a personal recreation, was sternly prohibited by the rules of the Life Saving Service; but Little Welsh was not fighting, as he subsequently explained to Surfrider Evans, who just then happened to stick his shock head over the crest of a neighboring dune. Wrecker Bright was a size and a half larger than the gunner; but Welsh did not stop to weigh in. Besides, Bright started it, trusting to his superior weight and bulk.

But, fuming that pent up volcano of wrath avenging the honor of his crew, the wrecker never had a chance. It was only when the spectator gasped from his sand-hill, "F'r law's sake, Welshy, leave some for me!" that Little Welsh backed away, still glowering, but with a feeling of remorse that in former days he would have been a stranger to.

"Mebbe ye think ye done me—'cause I ain't fit!" Bright began, heaving himself up.

Welsh laughed. "Lemme tell you fellows!" the wrecker snarled, his greedy little eyes glinting evilly. "You're in bad, the hull bunch o' ye, an' the joke's on you, Tom Welsh, you an' your catamaran! If you can't swim, you'd clear off the hull—"

Bright stopped, shrugged his shoulders, and lurched away, laughing in spite of his hurts. Welsh and Evans stared after him.

"What ye s'pose that halfbreed pirate's got in mind?" Surfrider Evans said. "Think he kin run us fellows off, an' fence in the rocks, like he done the Copper King—like she was sold gold 'stead o' just high-grade copper ore—an' make a private graveyard on the Grid? Is that what he's gunning for?"

"That's just what he's aimin' at!" Welsh shot his solid fist into the palm of his hand. "They're Old Man o' the Sea come to part along of the Copper King, an' Sam's hired him. It's wholesale barnyard or leach-combony an' lyn' lights, mebbe; but Sam Bright knows what's doing it. I'm going to catch that old ship-wrecker dead, if he's up in the air, or on the sea, or under the rocks! I got the credit to do it, an' there she lays, with her ears cocked up, waitin' for the gun!"

He glowered down at the Government hydroplane, a powerful machine with her strong canvas wings, and broad aluminum pontoons—long hollow air tanks they really were, flat on the bottom, and curved up at the bows for alighting or rising from the water.

"I got to clear off with my catamaran, here I?" said Skipper Welsh, his jaw squared, his blue eyes crinkled and snapping. "I'll do it too—right! You jes' watch my canvas, Mister Shipwrecker Sam!"

**SHIPS BOTTOM** did not have long to wait, either, for the hydroplane's curves, or the wrath of the menacing ocean, gathering its strength for another victim, giting at them in the rising wind and the wash of the sudden breakers. Ships Bottom didn't need any warning of evil, watching with sleepless eyes from tower-top, beach, and ocean. Alas! the prohibition of the inspector (on which he placed a liberal construction), Welsh put to sea, skimming out of the inlet, full power on the hydroplane.

"If they's devil's work afoot, an' I feel it in my bones—it'll come out of this water. Anyhow, we're all on the beach. Ships Bottom's staid!"

"There goes Lighthouse Jack, travin' arter Welshy's windjammer like he was afraid to be alone," Captain Casco remarked to the gloomy Johnson, as they watched the hydroplane breasting the rackoned waves like a gray gull.

The sea was flattening rather than rising as the wind rose, a southeast twister, crying mad as it came. Just like the Copper King night!

"I reckon ye better get that life car cleared for action, Johnny," Casco said. "If some o' them sea wagons does smash on, it's the only way to get 'em. Time we went prowlin' out. What's Welshy up to?"

They saw the hydroplane, only a silver at sea now, suddenly dip sidewise, barely missing the rocks, where the end of the bluestone reef showed above the surface. The machine lurched and up, as if dodging the swoop of a mighty, invisible hand. For a moment it staggered up, Welsh driving it high to look over the horizon, then in a wide arc swung back to shore.

"That reef rock reached for him, Jim! I see it when he sprung!" Long Johnson looked at his Captain with eyes that held a lurking fear.

Casco forced a laugh. The hydroplane alighted on the bay, with the big forward wheel bumping behind it, and turned slowly into the landing.

Little Welsh, white to his tanned forehead, seemed dazed when they questioned him. "Same way I had trouble before. Something grabbed—"

"Like Johnny here seen it—!" Casco began. He stopped.

The three men stood staring—hard-faced, iron-nerved seafarers who faced death daily as a trade. The unknown, the unfathomable, gripped them, the fear that sailors know and men that traverse the high heavens.

"Holy smoke!" Welsh shook himself and sprang up the beach. "The hull Atlantic's washin', Cap!" he cried. "I see it when I got up, an' a stemwinder in the thick of it!"

The heavens had blackened as by the sweep of a mighty brush, blotting out sun and sky. The ocean turned to ink, silvered by leaping fish. Sand dunes shifted, swept backward. The whistling buoy sobbed out at sea. A sonorous roar traversed Gridiron Reef with the rush of a railroad train, and the sea swept in, filling the gulches, choking the inlet, and overflowing into the bay.

"Something of a tidal wave, eh?" Casco roared cheerfully. "Ain't nuthin' we can't see there!"

Ships Bottom was at professional work, weather-blenched faces scanning the ocean. From the station tower the bell tolled thrice—"Ships' sighted!" Casco's binoculars picked one up, bounding up coast and making bad weather of it.

"Algonquin, twenty-thousand-tonner, King liner," the life Captain recited evenly; then, in a bell's bellow, "I'd give a month's pay to see her stern down nor'ard! She's sister ship to the Copper King!"

The Algonquin, just as the Copper King had done, was bowling up the coast with the sea on her quarter, crowding the shoreline because she dared not turn broadside to the gale, deep laden as she was. Twice she tried out, as Casco watched, and each time the sea rolled over her iron deck.

"Next time she turns out she'll turn turtle!" the Captain growled. "An' they's a even chance she'll go by, this water. He'd better beach her."

"Draws thirty feet, an' the Grid marks thirty; ore loaded to the guns, she is—best she'll do against it," Little Welsh had pounced on the Coastwise Record, looking up the coming ship. "Thirty for her crew too!"

"That'll be a jam load for the motor, or three loads for the lifeline, tight packed—I don't trust their boats," Casco said. "Get busy, Boys, fore it's dark. What's you?" The Captain swept the sea with his glass. "Just our luck! I knowed we're goin' to get it. That's a real head yunker, battin' in! See her flash!"

A pale flare, far out to sea, flicked the sky, black now as the inside of a hat. No need to tell the Ships Bottom crew that a looting cruiser in that weather, working her searchlight, was other than a Government craft. "Wyandotte, most likely: she's on this beat," Casco said.

**THE** Algonquin, even now, did not seem to recognize her danger from the lurking reef. Far down the beach the patrol was burning warning Coaston lights, one after the other. The Government wireless operator was trying to raise the ship, sending up crashing blue-green volleys, and over the life station flapped the stream of code signals. Cleared for action, the powerful Ships Bottom motor, fit to hold a ship's crew, nosed the landing in the bay; the lifeless lay alongside, a fat, iron

pontoon, that would carry a half-score men on a launch or through a seaway, with airholes punched outward through its cover to keep the sea from seeping in. The crew seldom bathered with that.

A hurried clanging from the watchtower told them of the coming up of the ship on the reef, blundering through the smother that sometimes hid her from sight of the beach. Overhead the wireless clashed its useless volleys to the void. But the ship held on—

"She's bent on barr'ry, bat blind!" Casco roared.

"Jump her, Boys!"

"I can't raise the rev'ue, an' that ship won't answer," the wireless operator complained. "Looks like that Government boat is trying to fetch her, from her flash. You fellows ain't got much time!"

The crew sprang for the boat. As the men tumbled in, Little Welsh, crouching over the motor box, looked up with a scared face.

"She won't work! Gone dead!" He flung down his tools, crying mad. "Sticks like molasses! We can't use the power! Sail her!"

To beat out in the big motor, using her lugails, that was Ships Bottom's only chance. At that, the revenue would best them to it—rips their eye again! But the hydroplane was there to warn ships in peril—if only it would work!

"She's got to work!" Welsh snarled. He was out of the boat and clawing out on the bird-ship's heaving planes. "Zip! She's all humb, Cap! I can hold out in that blow. Mebbe the rev'ue'll git the bird; but Ships Bottom'll be there to say howdy!"

"A single Coaston may send her off. Good luck to ye, Welshy!" the Captain cried.

"Tell 'em we're comin'!" roared the crew.

**WELSH** took no chance of turning a somersault or smashing up before he started—better the surf than the whiplash of the wind. Those men knew what to do, given half a chance. High on the sand dune, Captain Casco watched the peril at sea and directed operations. A surfrider, wading and swimming, crossed the inlet, and when the hydroplane on her flat pontoons charged the swordcut on the sands two men on the ends of a half-inch line helped her through.

When Welsh cleared it, topping the first big breaker, the lifeboat was already lying down on the wind, mooring for the cut. He heard Casco hooting something, but he lost it in the storm. Dead ahead, a trifling glimmer, he guessed the revenue cutter's searchlight; the freighter was somewhere in that rolling mist of sea smoke.

"No lights—no siren—actin' just like the other, she is!" Welsh was thinking of the Copper King, if that fellow liner to the one in the darkness, and the long roll of disaster she initiated. "That reef got every one of 'em!"

It was the lure of the reef he was trying to live from memory—no hard job in the task he had on hand. Stout as she was, the hydroplane, with his light weight, was trucking bad weather of it—as well she might—whipsawing like an angry dancing needle over the surface of the sea. To rise from the water would be fatal in that overhead blast. Welsh crouched, a drowned rat, over the driving wheel, steering by instinct in the black sea smother.

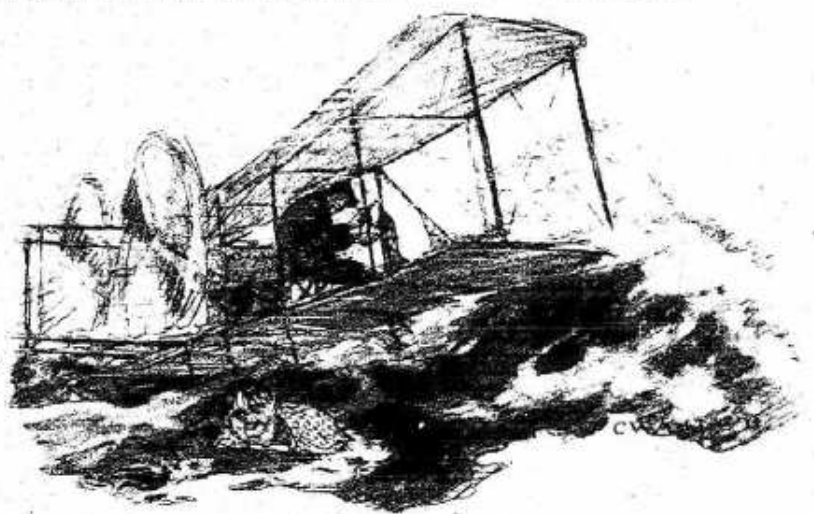
"They'll need lights and out there!" he gasped.

He was out over a mile now, nearly as he could judge, the motor running fine. "Welsh's windjammer," alone of the apparatus of the beach, was making good! The thin planes cut the wind like a knife. The reef rang on the right tied past like phantoms—and suddenly he saw and cried out. The ship had beat him to it!

The freighter Algonquin, he could almost read the gold letters on her bow—a wallowing black hulk, twin funneled, lay broadside to the sea, farther out. She had almost passed the sunken reef; but she was not wheeling now—Welsh saw that. The ship's engines had stopped; every light was out; and suddenly an ominous grumbling, deep down, on the ship's keel—scraping the reef!

Caught in her stride, the Algonquin turned slowly to

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"You Can't Kill a Ships Bottom Man!"



course of his four university years. A broad man with a variety of interests and with little narrowness of vision is to be commended; but it is the purpose of this short article to sound a note of warning.

Several writers have already in a conscientious and thorough manner elaborated the shortcomings of our American institutions of learning. They have compared the American senior with those men in English and Continental universities who are about to take their degrees, and the comparison has been considered to be entirely to the advantage of the latter. Of course, the comparison cannot be wholly fair, since the scheme of study in the English and French and German universities makes definitely for more or less specialization. When a man takes his degree on the other side he does in a very real sense know a great deal about one or a few subjects or branches of study. His work has been markedly intensive. Moreover, it is only too apparent that the young man should have cultural opportunities in music, art, and so forth such as can be found in two places in America. However, whatever the differences of conditions and environment, the great fault of the American college man, and a mistake that the freshman should foresee and guard against, is that he tends to have too much interest. Too large a premium is placed upon activity in "college affairs."

One would not of course advocate that the freshman should become a grind. If he is athletic, so much the better—if athletics per-

se do not become his sole endeavor. But when a man attempts scholastic work, athletic success, political leadership, social prominence, and adds to those participation in the musical, literary, dramatic, or religious sides of university life—a variety of interests actually attempted by many of our college men—he is attempting too much. Something must suffer. He inevitably becomes a Jack of all trades and master of none, and the realization of this fact becomes quite painful when in the early years of professional and business life he meets college graduates who have not so erred. But, lest I be misunderstood, far worse than the man who does too much is the man who does nothing. Every freshman should discover at least one branch of work outside the classroom for which he has a natural bent. His service to the university community along this line is his duty and his privilege.

Just one more suggestion. The American Rhodes scholars at Oxford have specially admired the keen interest of all Englishmen in sport. No matter if a man can never by any chance make a Varsity team, he should nevertheless go out and play on minor teams. We must develop in this country intercollegiate athletics. Too much attention is now paid to the picked man. The mediocre and average athlete must be given his chance. At Oxford and Cambridge it is literally true that seventy-five per cent. of the students are engaged every afternoon during university terms in some branch of sport. There are no leisurelies.

## THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

(Continued from page 6)

the sea, looking back. She was looking death in the face, and she knew it, and her great lament was ringing like nuts on the deck. But Welsh was not interested in her just then. He was busy trying to save himself from taking water into the breakers that were doing their best to fling the hydroplane like a stone, stunning blows, blinding him. Something had happened. The machine had stalled, almost dead, the electric motor at the stern, just as it had done with him twice before. He was in the grip of the Old Man of the Sea, anchored, sluggishly wallowing right in the sucking, boiling maelstrom, where the waves and the Copper King what was left of her lay foundered under thirty feet of water.

Little Welsh was scared, scared all through, as was suffocating in the fog breakers that threatened to tear the hydroplane apart. The machine had struck nothing, but it was in the same place, swaying to and fro on the mark waters. Steadily strong as it was, possessing slight resistance to wind or waves, this thing could not last. Besides, the sea was washing down on him in the whirlpool, whatever held him.

Little Welsh was not old, but he did it, looking a ghost in torch on the aluminum framework, and waving the flaring perspiration on his face, all so-called him and he dropped it. He remembered afterward that the metal bar he clung to the flaring hydroplane's deck. The nervous center of least would see that signal red danger, though it harrowed the little gambler's heart to call Ships Betwixt and in.

An answering beam, passing the freighter in the cabin glow of a ghost ship, told him that the hydroplane, all out of sight in the smother, was coming to the rescue. From the ship he caught the rattle of anchor chains, and he could make her out through the darkness, a long length away, quivering down with enormous ramblings of a shifting cargo, as she reared at her last moorings. Impetuous to move, Welsh watched her sliding, down, dragged down by the shifting and wading in her, or the mysterious power that lurked in the muck, or both. Where was she? Betwixt? Hang on!

The sea clambered over the hydroplane, beating down its canvas wings. One plane was already in waters. The little surfman had come out, luckless and countless, in the teeth of a sea that drifted that dropped the temperature like a mortar. He was chilled to the bone. His hands, locked in a death grip of the steering wheel in his efforts to start, were frozen. His breath was coming in gasps. The dread and horror of his surroundings told the light in his claret eyes, and there he was, fast going. Shades seemed to rise from the sea, crawling and moving.

"Algo, algo, algo-y! Stan' by to me-lee on an' 'crash'!"

WELSH opened his dazed eyes. No light but Big Jim Cooey's ever let out this way. Out from the Gridiron Red Ship's white motor came snorting through the spume. She swung past, a pin-

tol shot away, a glorious sight to the glazing eyes of Little Welsh, her curved bows flinging the spray, her men crunched down, all eyes on the sinking ship. Cooey up forward, making a trumpet of his hands. The fat shape of the sherdon flicker chased after the motor.

A gush of warmth swelled Little Welsh's heart. "That's the ticket! They got the old air tank with 'em! She hauls astern!" With the lifecar—that was the only way—they could pick off the seawashed men of the one carrier. "The rec'nue isn't in it now," he chuckled.

But where did he come in to help? The men could not see him, for the spume and another of the Gridiron, and he crunched, an image of ice, frosted by the sea salt, his flumes frozen on him. The bullies had no leisure to waste on him! Ships Bottom had business on hand! The boat was pressed for time! Later, when they got done, maybe—

Scowling, fumbling with his levers and his wheel, he forgot fear and cold. "I'm always getting the short end of the stick! But they better get to her while the going's good!"

Surtman Welsh had seen iron ships go down before, too many of them; but he had dreamed of no wreck like this. It was horrible, unnatural, like everything that concerned the unseen yet—creaky. A ship tortured—drowned by inches! This murderous power that caught ships and aerial planes, that sucked out the breath of the wireless and killed electric motors—it was going to get him! He too had blundered in through the snare to his fate!

Well—Ships Bottom was going stale, anyhow! That investigation that was coming—He was growing sleepy. The yawning shapes came again. That fat freighter was trying to stand on end!

The Algonquin was so close he could hear the shattering ahead, the whole length of the ship away. Her crew had taken to the boat. The after half of her deck was under water. Her bow, reared up, formed an eighty-foot hurricane that struggled and tore at its chain cables. Welsh could look into her funnel tops, trained over the reef like smoking pipes. "Jee" like she's backing down in a hole," he gasped and caught his breath, thoroughly awake now.

Was that the solution of the mystery? Was there a funnel down there in the sea, a huge hole yawning in the ocean floor, smashed through maybe by the awful impact when the Copper King charged the reef? Was that what lured vessels to their death, sucking them in from the sea into a sinking ship sacks down below? Welsh had heard of such things,—aluminum cables, sequimies, that wrecked havoc, killed, and went out of business; but that would not account for the wireless attraction, the stopping of ships' engines, scattering of light and power. Only Sam Bright, the wrecker, knew the truth!

A CHICK came from the wreck, and through the smoke and the blinding spray Welsh glimpsed a shimmering object at

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